

also provide grants to State and local entities to establish similar local databases. The records that would be preserved and made more accessible include the Southern Claims Commission Records, Records of the Freedmen's Bureau, Slave Impressments Records, Slave Payroll Records, and Slave Manifests. This legislation would also authorize a total of \$10 million to establish this national database and provide grants to states, academic institutions, and genealogical associations.

Recognizing that we can ill afford to allow these irreplaceable stories to be lost to the withering decay of time, our bill takes meaningful steps to resurrect the rich history of African-Americans. Not only will it allow a means by which African-Americans can trace their lineage, but also as a means by which we can preserve historically comprehensive and accurate information about our collective history as a nation.

As Author Maya Angelou once said, "No man can know where he is going unless he knows exactly where he has been and exactly how he arrived at his present place." On behalf of all Americans, join us in forging that essential nexus between the past and the present by cosponsoring this bi-partisan legislation.

TRIBUTE TO RAYMOND C. CHURCH

HON. PATRICK J. KENNEDY

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. KENNEDY of Rhode Island. Mr. Speaker, it is with pleasure that I rise today to honor Raymond C. Church, a life-long resident of the great state of Rhode Island, in recognition of his 16 years of service to the accounting profession and the Rhode Island Society of CPAs (RISCPA).

Ray has very ably led the RISCPA and its nearly 1,500 CPAs and affiliated professionals throughout Rhode Island, and he is considered a leader among his peers. It is on this day that we thank him for his service to the accounting profession, to the community and to his country, and wish him well in his retirement.

Ray has also worked diligently for the citizens of Rhode Island and particularly the residents of Rhode Island House District 48. Ray was elected to the State of Rhode Island's House of Representatives in 2004 and has been serving on the House Committee on Corporations and the Permanent Joint Committee on Economic Development. He also served as the North Smithfield Town Administrator from 1987–1989 and is the former Chairman of the North Smithfield Town Budget Committee.

Ray served his country honorably in the U.S. Army, and is a Vietnam War veteran. He attended Bryant College and graduated with a major in Accounting in 1982. Ray is not only dedicated to his profession but to his family as well. He and his wife Carol have been married for 33 years and have one daughter, Jennifer.

It is with great pleasure that we honor Raymond C. Church today, and congratulate him and thank him for all he has done for his hometown, the state of Rhode Island, the association community, and the accounting profession.

RECOGNITION OF LANCE CORPORAL NICHOLAS KLEIBOEKER

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life of Lance Corporal Nicholas Kleiboeker who was killed in action fighting for freedom in Al Hillah, Iraq on May 13, 2003.

Lance Cpl Kleiboeker was a 19 year-old from Irvington, Illinois and was assigned to the 2nd Combat Engineer Battalion, 2nd Marine Division, based at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. He was a 2001 graduate from Odin High School in Odin, IL.

Kleiboeker made the ultimate sacrifice for his country. He is survived by Gary and Sheryl Kleiboeker of Iuka, Sam Clark of Sumner and many other family, friends and loved ones. I am proud of the service this young man gave to his country and the service his fellow troops perform everyday. It is soldiers like Kleiboeker that are risking their lives day in and day out to ensure our freedom here at home and to others throughout the rest of the world. I salute him and my best wishes go out to his family and all the troops fighting to ensure freedom and democracy. God bless them and may God continue to bless America.

CURT GOWDY POST OFFICE

HON. BARBARA CUBIN

OF WYOMING

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mrs. CUBIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a great American broadcaster who sadly passed away earlier this year but left an indelible mark on America as "a cowboy at the microphone." You may have known him from his coverage of some of America's most famous sporting events, including Joe Namath's famous "guaranteed" Super Bowl victory and Hank Aaron's 715th career Home Run to surpass Babe Ruth; or you may have learned about his love for fly fishing and the outdoors as host of The American Sportsman for 20 years.

A pioneer of TV sportscasting, Curtis Edward Gowdy was born July 31, 1919 in Green River, Wyoming to Edward and Ruth Gowdy. Schooled at the University of Wyoming, Curt got his start in broadcasting in Cheyenne, Wyoming. From there he went on to a career that spanned 7 decades, 16 World Series, 12 Rose Bowls, 9 Super Bowls, and 8 Olympiads resulting in admission to 20 different Halls of Fame. While his career took him all across our great country, we in Wyoming have always felt a special bond with him as one of our own. That's why I'm pleased to introduce legislation today to honor him by naming the post office in his birthplace after this cowboy, broadcaster, sportsman, husband and father. I would encourage my colleagues in the House to join me as a sponsor of this bill saluting Curt Gowdy, a man whose name is boldly etched in the pantheon of American broadcasters.

COMMEMORATING NATIONAL MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate National Minority Health Month. Celebrated during the month of April, the month highlights the importance of improving minority health through focusing on initiatives to eradicate health disparities.

The month was created by the National Minority Health Foundation in response to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Healthy People 2010 Initiative. Through the Foundation's efforts, and those of Representative DONNA CHRISTENSEN, Congress passed the resolution in 2001 during the 107th Congress.

Recognizing the disproportionate impact communities of color are burdened with pertaining to equitable access to health care resources, quality and outcomes, the month aims to eliminate health disparities through several mechanisms. These mechanisms focus on cultivating public and private partnerships among health care providers through enhancing social marketing, research, and legislative concerns as well as strengthening career training of professional health care providers to promote cultural competency.

Mr. Speaker, this is not a new issue for our Nation. In fact, in 1914, the state of African-American health was so dire that Booker T. Washington established National Negro Health Week (NNHW) in 1915. Additionally, in 1921, when the NNHW committee wanted to expand to reach a wider audience, the U.S. Surgeon General assisted them and together they published the Negro Health Week Bulletin.

In the same vein as these events, National Minority Health Month also serves as a reminder of how much work needs to be done to eliminate health and healthcare inequities. Although public health data dismisses overt prejudice within the health care profession, in reality what many minorities face is a less offensive, but equally deadly force. Borrowing a term often used by President Bush (in another context): We are confronting "the soft bigotry of low expectations."

Mr. Speaker, there is much research that supports the need for focusing on eliminating health disparities. In 2004, Dr. David Satcher, now Director of the National Center for Primary Care at Morehouse College, and Professor Stephen Woolfe, Director of Research at Virginia Commonwealth University's Department of Family Medicine, released mortality data that their research team had gleaned from the National Center for Health Statistics. During the 1990s, they concluded, more than 886,000 deaths could have been prevented if African Americans had received the same health care as White Americans.

Equally shocking are the findings released in the 2002 Institute of Medicine report—"Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities", which concluded with great authority that Americans of color receive lower-quality health care than Caucasians. It further explains that African-Americans receive inferior medical care—compared to the majority population—even when the patients' incomes and insurance plans are the same.

Most shocking is that these disparities contribute to our higher death rates from heart disease, cancer, diabetes, HIV/AIDS and other life-endangering conditions.

Mr. Speaker, the disparities are real and frightening. In fact, of the 46 million uninsured Americans, at least 60 percent of Hispanic Americans and more than 43 percent of African Americans are uninsured. Further, while African-Americans comprise only 12.3 percent of the population, we account for half of all of the newly diagnosed HIV/AIDS infections. Statistics also indicate that non-Hispanic whites have a higher 5-year cancer survival rate than minority populations.

For this reason, I also would like to recognize National Minority Cancer Awareness Week which is an important effort held during the week of April 16–22. During the week, education is used as the weapon to empower the nation about the shocking disparities that are found within the population of individuals suffering from cancer.

Mr. Speaker, through these statistics, coupled with both the Satcher-Woolfe and the Institute of Medicine's 2002 indictments of our nation's health care system, it is safe to say that health and healthcare disparities are not only factual, but they also have an overwhelming negative impact on minority populations.

That is why dedication to keeping the harsh reality of health care disparities in the public spotlight is essential. For it should be mission of this Congress to raise the expectations of this society—it should also be our mission to assure that all Americans receive the health care they deserve.

If we are to bring about this change—if we are to substantially improve the health and life expectancy of all Americans, we must first fully appreciate the enormity of the challenge that we are confronting. We must also fundamentally change the way that this nation addresses our public health challenges. In fact, too many Americans of every race are dying before their time.

Mr. Speaker, we still have a difficult road to travel before universal health care is recognized as a basic civil right in this country. I have been working on these health care problems for quite a while now, and I am convinced that the acceptance of universal health care as a fundamental civil right will aid us in ending the debilitating health care system that is crumbling before us. In my mind, both sides of the aisle can provide part of the answer to this very big issue hampering our nation.

IN HONOR OF THE CIVIC CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE HONORABLE ELEANORE NISSLEY

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a true leader and visionary, the Honorable Eleanore Nissley of Ridgewood, New Jersey. Eleanore is being honored for her outstanding civic contributions by the Center for Civic Responsibility next week. It is an honor richly deserved and long overdue.

Eleanore Nissley has been a shining star in New Jersey politics and community life for 40

years. She served as Bergen County's Republican Committeewoman and has offered her talents and political acumen to candidates and campaigns at every level. In fact, given the integral role Mrs. Nissley has played in New Jersey politics, the New Jersey Federation of Republican Women named her Woman of the Year. Her longtime friend and President of the NJFRW, Dot Romaine calls Eleanore "the epitome of the Republican woman."

A native of Rutherford and an avid sports fan, Eleanore has served on the Hackensack Meadowlands Development Commission and the New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority. Eleanore also gives her time and energy to the Boy Scouts, and she serves on the Board of Directors for the Interchange Bank.

One would think, Mr. Speaker, with all that Eleanore Nissley gives to her community that she hasn't a spare moment to herself. But, in fact, Mrs. Nissley's business abilities are equally renowned. And, Eleanore is committed first and foremost to her family. The mother of four and grandmother of many, Eleanore always finds time to devote to her loving lineage.

I am pleased beyond words, Mr. Speaker, to take this opportunity to add my thanks and praise to this chorus as well. Eleanore Nissley has time and time again given me advice and counsel that is priceless. I value Eleanore's friendship. And, I look forward to years of working with her to make North Jersey an even better place to live and work and raise a family.

HONORING THE EFFORTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA FOR ITS OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO ITS CITIZENS SERVING IN AND RETURNING FROM OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM AND OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I wish every employer in America was able to follow the lead of the County of Santa Clara, California. County employees who are on active military duty in direct connection with an armed conflict receive a salary augmentation which, in combination with their military pay, provides 100% of their base salary. Their employee benefits are also continued while they are deployed. Employees receive this salary augmentation and benefits for an indefinite period as long as they are involved in military service. The effort to support those in military service, guard and Reserves, doesn't end there.

The Veterans Service Office is a county funded agency established in 1946, assisting veterans and their families to obtain the benefits and services they have earned through their military services. The Veterans Service Office works closely with the Santa Clara County Employment Committee (VEC). The mission of the VEC is to promote the employment of veterans within the county by assisting local employers in recruiting veterans for job openings as well as providing employment-related assistance services for job-seeking veterans.

Each month, the California Department of Veterans Affairs forwards a list of returning veterans to the County VSO. This list includes on average the names of 50 to 100 veterans who have indicated an interest in receiving information on the services available for them from the county. Upon their return each veteran receives a letter from the VSO and a copy of the county's "Welcome Home" pamphlet, which includes information on veterans' services, health care, employment assistance and other benefits.

The Veterans Service Office, working in collaboration with the Peninsula Veterans Center, explores every opportunity to speak to returning veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. These talks occur as frequently as weekly, or whenever the officials are invited to address groups, such as new Transportation Security Administration (TSA) employees—veterans who have recently returned home.

I have heard from families that, even though there is understandable worry about a loved one in a combat zone, at least that worry is not joined by worry about financial disaster. For those deployed, the strain and stress of separation from family is not compounded by financial worries.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to draw attention to the efforts of the Government of Santa Clara County and its employees as they serve the needs of our returning veterans and those currently serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Many in our country disagreed with the decision to invade Iraq, but no American should disagree with the need to support our troops and their families while they serve and to assist veterans after their active service is complete.

Santa Clara County, like other local governments in California, faces a fiscal bind. State and Federal governments have shifted costs to local government but in California, local governments have no ability to raise taxes in response. That means fiscal crunch time.

Despite that, the people of Santa Clara County, led by its Board of Supervisors and professional staff know this: the time of deployment should not be fiscal crunch time for the service member and family.

Let all employers, both public and private, look to Santa Clara County as a model of employer behavior.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of efforts of the Government of Santa Clara County and its employees as they serve the needs of our returning veterans and those currently serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. I am proud of the citizens and taxpayers of Santa Clara County who stand behind these fine efforts.

NATIVE AMERICAN LANGUAGES ACT AMENDMENTS OF 2006

HON. ED CASE

OF HAWAII

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 27, 2006

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I am most pleased to introduce the Native American Languages Amendments Act of 2006. This is a reintroduction in revised form of my bill, H.R. 2362, from the 108th Congress.